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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/099,746	03/13/2002	Christopher A. Miller	H00010611187.1115101	4053

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EXAMINER

SHARON, AYAL I

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2123

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/099,746	Applicant(s) MILLER ET AL.	
	Examiner Ayal I. Sharon	Art Unit 2123	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 March 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 June 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/10/2003</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Introduction

1. Claims 1-20 of U.S. Application 10/099,746, originally filed on 03/13/2002, have been presented for examination.

Specification

2. The instant application claims priority to provisional application 60/276,379, titled "Policy Metrics for Visualization, Learning and Decision Guidance". The provisional application included, *inter alia*, a document with the same title, which states:

This invention was supported by the government under the Agile Information Control Environment, DARPA Contract Number DABT63-99-C-0003. The government may have certain rights in the invention.

3. The specification of the instant application is silent on this issue. Clarification is required.

Claim Objections

4. Claim 3 objected to because of the following informalities: a typographical error. Claim 3 recites: "A method according to claim 3 ..." For the sake of compact prosecution, Examiner interpreted that claim 3 depends from claim 2. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

5. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

6. **Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.**

7. Claims 1-18 are directed to an abstract idea. The claimed invention is therefore not concrete or tangible. See MPEP §2106 (A), and *In re Warmerdam*, 33 F.3d 1354, 1360, 31 USPQ2d 1754, 1759 (Fed. Cir. 1994). See also *Schrader*, 22 F.3d at 295, 30 USPQ2d at 1459.

8. Claim 1 recites "a structured model" and "policy goals", which the Examiner interprets as corresponding to the "solution engine" cited in the specification (and Item 20 of Fig.1) of the instant application. Examiner interprets that the claimed invention is a mathematical algorithm that is not tangibly embodied.

9. Dependent claims 2-16 reinforce this interpretation, especially:

- a. claim 2, which recites that the "policy goals have weights";
- b. claim 3, which recites the step of "aggregating the weights";
- c. claim 4, which recites that the "policy goals define a functional expression";
- d. claim 5, which recites that the "functional expression includes Boolean operators";

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- e. claim 6, which recites that the “policy goals further include one or more functional parameters”.

10. Independent Claims 17 and 19 are directed to an abstract idea, and therefore are not statutory. The independent claims appear to be directed to either a mathematical algorithm (as in claim 1), or more broadly directed to a conversation or debate regarding policy. For example, a legislative debate in Congress would fall under the scope of the claims. Dependent claims 18 and 20 do not remedy this defect.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

11. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

12. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

13. **Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement.** The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

- a. Independent claim 1 recites “a structured model”, which the Examiner interprets as corresponding to the “solution engine” cited in the

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specification (and Item 20 of Fig.1) of the instant application. Examiner interprets that this model is a mathematical model.

- b. There exist a great variety of known mathematical techniques used in operations research modeling.
- c. Examiner interprets that one of ordinary skill in the art would require undue experimentation to make the specific mathematical model that is used in the claimed invention, due to the lack of description of the claimed mathematical model.

14. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for the intended use of flight scheduling, does not reasonably provide enablement for other intended uses. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. The only intended use described in the in the specification involves flight scheduling (see specification, p.10, lines 7, to p.11, line 22, and Fig.3, and Fig.4, Items 204 and 206).

15. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The term "applying the one or more policy goals" in independent claims 1, 17, and 19 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "applying" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree,

and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. The dependent claims do not remedy this defect.

16. **Claims 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements.** See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted element in claims 17-20 is the step of “providing a structured model for modeling the operation of the system” that is recited in claim 1. Without this step, it is unknown how it is determined (and then “reported”) “how well the process performs with the proposed relative change”.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

17. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

18. The prior art used for these rejections is as follows:

- a. Funk, Harry B. et al. “Applying Intent-Sensitive Policy to Automated Resource Allocation: Command, Communication and Most Importantly, Control.” Proc. of the Conf. on Human Interaction with Complex Systems. May 2000. Urbana-Champaign, Illinois. (Hereinafter “**Funk**”).

- b. Dorneich, C.D. et al. "CHIME for Aviation Enterprise Post-Operations Data Mining: Preliminary Assessment". March 10, 2000. (Hereinafter "Dorneich").

19. Examiner obtained the date of the Funk reference from the bibliography of the "DOGMA" reference that is cited on the PTO-892 form.

20. The claim rejections are hereby summarized for Applicant's convenience. The detailed rejections follow.

21. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Funk.

22. In regards to Claim 1, Funk teaches the following limitations:

1. A method for evaluating the operation of a system relative to one or more policy goals, the method comprising:

providing a structured model for modeling the operation of the system, the structured model having a plurality of entities, each entity having one or more attributes and one or more relationships between the entities;

See Funk, especially: p.2, "Policy Representation" section, which teaches:

"What is needed is a more precise, mathematical formulation of policy, one in which the syntax and semantics are well defined and unambiguous."

See also Funk: p.2, the definitions of formulas and parameters on pp.2-3.

allowing a user to provide one or more policy goals, the one or more policy goals referencing, at least in part, one or more of the entities and/or attributes of the structured solution space; and

See Funk, especially: p.3, "Policy Conformance Metrics", 1st para., which teaches:

"IPSO-FACTO uses the set of policies captured from commanders to assign an importance value to any incoming request for communication resources (illustrated conceptually in Figure 1)."

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applying the one or more policy goals against the structured model to determine how well the system performed relative to the one or more policy goals.

See Funk, especially: p.3, "Policy Conformance Metrics", last para., which teaches:

"In other words, $value_1 > value_2$ if the total utility delivered under the two resource allocations are equal for each importance value down to some level i , and the first resource allocation delivers greater utility at importance level i . This value measure is used by at least one of the AIC implementations."

23. In regards to Claim 2, Funk teaches the following limitations:

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the one or more policy goals have weights that indicate the relative importance of the policy goal.

See Funk, especially: the formula (1) on p.3, especially the parameter i_k , which is defined as "the importance that IPSO_FACTO assigns to request r_k ."

24. In regards to Claim 3, Funk teaches the following limitations:

3. A method according to claim 3 further comprising the step of aggregating the weights of the one or more policy goals to provide an aggregate policy goal metric.

See Funk, especially: the formula (1) on p.3, especially the symbol " Σ ", which represents the "aggregating" of the weights.

25. In regards to Claim 4, Funk teaches the following limitations:

4. A method according to claim 1 wherein selected policy goals define a functional expression referencing one or more of the entities, attributes, and/or relationships of the structured model.

See Funk, especially: Fig.1 on p.2, and the associated text in the "Policy Representation" section on p.2, which teaches:

"This representation is conceptually illustrated in Fig.1. Each commander's policy is created as a set of statements (individual 'policy elements') each of which assigns an importance (or value) function to a defined sub-region in a multi-dimensional space."

26. In regards to Claim 5, Funk teaches the following limitations:

5. A method according to claim 4 wherein the functional expression includes Boolean operators.

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See Funk, especially: the last equation on p.2, " $p: W \times A \times \mathbf{P}(A) \times C \rightarrow I$ ".
Funk teaches that $\mathbf{P}(A)$ is the power-set of A (the set of all subsets of A).

Examiner interprets that a Boolean function is the function used to create a "power-set".

27. In regards to Claim 6, Funk teaches the following limitations:

6. A method according to claim 4 wherein selected policy goals further include one or more functional parameters.

See Funk, especially: the teaching on p.2 that:

"More formally, an information request r_k is of the form $(w_k, s_k, \mathbf{d}_k, c_k, u_k)$
..."

Examiner interprets that these parameters correspond to the claimed "functional parameters".

28. In regards to Claim 7, Funk teaches the following limitations:

7. A method according to claim 6 wherein one or more of the functional parameters include weights.

See Funk, especially: the teaching on p.2 that:

"A policy provides, for each request r_k , an importance value i_k ".

29. In regards to Claim 8, Funk teaches the following limitations:

8. A method according to claim 6 wherein one or more of the functional parameters include limits.

See Funk, especially: the teaching on p.2 that:

"The set of possible importance values is I , and has been defined as the set of real numbers between 0 and 1."

30. In regards to Claim 9, Funk teaches the following limitations:

9. A method according to claim 1 wherein the selected policy goals are specified by a user via a user interface that provides a reference to one or more of the entities, attributes, and/or relationships of the structured model.

See Funk, especially: Fig.3 on p.4, and associated text in the "Implementation" section on p.4.

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31. In regards to Claim 10, Funk teaches the following limitations:

10. A method according to claim 9 wherein the user interface allows the user to define one or more policy goals referencing selected entities and/or attributes of the structured model.

See Funk, especially: Fig.3 on p.4, and associated text in the "Implementation" section on p.4.

32. In regards to Claim 11, Funk teaches the following limitations:

11. A method according to claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

allowing a user to propose a change to the operation of the system;

applying the one or more policy goals to the structured model with the proposed change to determine how well the system performed relative to the one or more policy goals.

This claim is rejected on the same grounds as claim 1. It is merely a repetition of the same limitations.

33. In regards to Claim 12, Funk teaches the following limitations:

12. A method according to claim 11 wherein the one or more policy goals have weights that indicate the relative importance of the policy goal.

This claim is rejected on the same grounds as claim 2. It is merely a repetition of the same limitations.

34. In regards to Claim 13, Funk teaches the following limitations:

13. A method according to claim 12 further comprising the step of aggregating the weights of the one or more policy goals to provide an aggregate policy goal metric.

This claim is rejected on the same grounds as claim 3. It is merely a repetition of the same limitations.

35. In regards to Claim 14, Funk teaches the following limitations:

14. A method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of searching a historical database of past system performance to identify a historical change to the operation of the system that is similar to the proposed change.

See Funk, especially the "Results" section on pp.4-5.

36. In regards to Claim 15, Funk teaches the following limitations:

15. A method according to claim 14 further comprising the step of applying the one or more policy goals to the structured model with the historical change to determine how well the system performed relative to the one or more policy goals.

See Funk, especially the "Results" section on pp.4-5.

37. In regards to Claim 16, Funk teaches the following limitations:

16. A method according to claim 15 further comprising the step of identifying a historical change that causes the system to perform relatively well relative to the one or more policy goals.

See Funk, especially the "Results" section on pp.4-5.

38. In regards to Claim 17, Funk teaches the following limitations:

17. A method for evaluating the operation of a process under a proposed change, the method comprising:

providing one or more policy goals;

See Funk, especially: p.2, "Policy Representation" section, which teaches:

"What is needed is a more precise, mathematical formulation of policy, one in which the syntax and semantics are well defined and unambiguous."

See also Funk: p.2, the definitions of formulas and parameters on pp.2-3.

proposing a change to the operation of the process;

See Funk, especially: p.3, "Policy Conformance Metrics", 1st para., which teaches:

"IPSO-FACTO uses the set of policies captured from commanders to assign an importance value to any incoming request for communication resources (illustrated conceptually in Figure 1)."

applying the one or more policy goals to determine how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals; and reporting how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals.

See Funk, especially: p.3, "Policy Conformance Metrics", last para., which teaches:

"In other words, $value_1 > value_2$ if the total utility delivered under the two resource allocations are equal for each importance value down to some

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level i , and the first resource allocation delivers greater utility at importance level i . This value measure is used by at least one of the AIC implementations.”

39. In regards to Claim 18, Funk teaches the following limitations:

18. A method according to claim 17 wherein the reporting step reports which of the one or more policy goals was violated, if any.

See Funk, especially: p.3, “Policy Conformance Metrics”, last para., which teaches:

“In other words, $value_1 > value_2$ if the total utility delivered under the two resource allocations are equal for each importance value down to some level i , and the first resource allocation delivers greater utility at importance level i . This value measure is used by at least one of the AIC implementations.”

40. In regards to Claim 19, Funk teaches the following limitations:

19. A method for evaluating the operation of a process under a proposed change, the method comprising:
allowing a policy manager to provide one or more policy goals;

See Funk, especially: p.3, “Policy Conformance Metrics”, 1st para., which teaches:

“IPSO-FACTO uses the set of policies captured from commanders to assign an importance value to any incoming request for communication resources (illustrated conceptually in Figure 1).”

storing the one or more policy goals;

See also Funk: p.2, the definitions of formulas and parameters on pp.2-3.

providing a structured solutions domain for the process;

See Funk, especially: p.2, “Policy Representation” section, which teaches:

“What is needed is a more precise, mathematical formulation of policy, one in which the syntax and semantics are well defined and unambiguous.”

See also Funk: p.2, the definitions of formulas and parameters on pp.2-3.

proposing a change to the operation of the process;

See also Funk: p.2, the definitions of formulas and parameters on pp.2-3.

applying the one or more policy goals to the structured solutions domain to determine how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals; and
reporting how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals.

See Funk, especially: p.3, "Policy Conformance Metrics", last para., which teaches:

"In other words, $value_1 > value_2$ if the total utility delivered under the two resource allocations are equal for each importance value down to some level i , and the first resource allocation delivers greater utility at importance level i . This value measure is used by at least one of the AIC implementations."

41. In regards to Claim 20, Funk teaches the following limitations:

20. A method according to claim 19 wherein the reporting step reports which of the one or more policy goals was violated, if any.

See Funk, especially: p.3, "Policy Conformance Metrics", last para., which teaches:

"In other words, $value_1 > value_2$ if the total utility delivered under the two resource allocations are equal for each importance value down to some level i , and the first resource allocation delivers greater utility at importance level i . This value measure is used by at least one of the AIC implementations."

42. Claims 1, 17, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dorneich.

43. In regards to Claim 1, Dorneich teaches the following limitations:

1. A method for evaluating the operation of a system relative to one or more policy goals, the method comprising:

providing a structured model for modeling the operation of the system, the structured model having a plurality of entities, each entity having one or more attributes and one or more relationships between the entities;

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

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allowing a user to provide one or more policy goals, the one or more policy goals referencing, at least in part, one or more of the entities and/or attributes of the structured solution space; and

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

applying the one or more policy goals against the structured model to determine how well the system performed relative to the one or more policy goals.

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

44. In regards to Claim 17, Dorneich teaches the following limitations:

17. A method for evaluating the operation of a process under a proposed change, the method comprising:

providing one or more policy goals;

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

proposing a change to the operation of the process;

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

applying the one or more policy goals to determine how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals; and

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

reporting how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals.

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

45. In regards to Claim 19, Dorneich teaches the following limitations:

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19. A method for evaluating the operation of a process under a proposed change, the method comprising:

allowing a policy manager to provide one or more policy goals;

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

storing the one or more policy goals;

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

providing a structured solutions domain for the process;

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

proposing a change to the operation of the process;

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

applying the one or more policy goals to the structured solutions domain to determine how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals; and

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

reporting how well the process performs with the proposed change relative to the one or more policy goals.

(See Dorneich, especially: pp.6-7, sections "4.2.1 What is Policy?" and "4.2.2 Application of policy to CHIME"; and pp.9-10, "5. Proposed Design" and "5.2 Where Does CHIME Fit In?")

Conclusion

46. The following prior art, made of record and not relied upon, is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
47. Dorneich, M.C. et al. "DOGMA: A Diversion Management Decision-Support System in Airline Operations." 2002 IEEE Int'l Conf. on Systems, Man and Cybernetics. Oct. 6-9, 2002. vol.6, pp.5-9. (The bibliography provides the publication date of the Funk reference that was used in the prior art rejections. The reference is too recent to be used as prior art).
48. Dorneich, C.D. et al. "Policy as an Interaction Method for Decision Support Systems." 45th Annual Meeting of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. Oct.8-12, 2001. (Intervening reference that post-dates the priority date of the provisional application, but pre-dates the filing date of the instant application. Relevant to the independent claims).

Correspondence Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ayal I. Sharon whose telephone number is (571) 272-3714. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, and the first Friday of a bi-week, 8:30 am – 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Picard can be reached at (571) 272-3749.

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Any response to this office action should be faxed to (571) 273-8300, or
mailed to:

USPTO
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

or hand carried to:


USPTO
Customer Service Window
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application
or proceeding should be directed to the Tech Center 2100 Receptionist, whose
telephone number is (571) 272-2100.

Ayal I. Sharon

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December 22, 2005


Paul L. Rodriguez 12/22/05
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2125